

The Mother's Mission

Lutheran Observer.

Every mother has an important mission, but some mothers have a very difficult mission. Should these lines fall under the eye of some good woman who has an unbelieving, scoffing husband, she may find suggestion and hope in the following selection:

There were six children in the household—three sons and three daughters. The mother was a cheery, quiet, religious woman, thoroughly bound up in her household. The husband was a resolute, defiant, outspoken unbeliever. He was a journalist, and lost no opportunity to have his fling at Christianity. Unbelievers bitter as himself were frequent guests at his table, and made themselves merry with the Bible and religious faith before the children. The mother seldom bore any part in the conversation. Not one of the children entertained the opinions of the father. As they grew up, one after another came into the church. The sons, especially, were noted for their intelligent piety. I felt a great curiosity to know how Mrs. Long accomplished her difficult task—by what means she neutralized the influence of her husband, and how she had led her entire flock into the fold of the Redeemer. I asked her to give me some clue to her method. "Well," she said, "it is a very simple matter. I never opposed my husband, never argued with him, nor disputed on the subject of religion. I never belittled him in the eyes of the children. But I never allowed them to go to bed without reading a few short verses of something the Saviour had said. I put his words over against the words of men. If the devil cast in the tares and went his way, might not the truth be as potent? And that's the whole of it."

CHARACTER-BUILDING AND THE HOME

M. S. DRURY

A good character is of more value than diamonds, and more beautiful than a garden of rarest flowers.

It is my wish, in this article, to indicate ways and means by which character-building and usefulness and happiness in the home may be delightfully facilitated.

In a house of architectural strength and beauty there is needed, first a good foundation; second, good material; and third, good workmanship. Deficiency in any one of these is fatal to the best results. What, then, are the essentials in the foundation of a good character? These are not knowledge in the abstract, but wisdom in seeing and feeling a correct and beautiful ideal of human life.

The earlier this ideal is discovered the better it will be for the individual builder. Many persons of large native talents start out without any fixed principles as the basis of noble and useful lives, and, as a consequence, add nothing or but little to high and holy purposes and achievements.

The second essential noted here is good material. Not always the most brilliant talents succeed best, but rather the diligent and

wise use of the talent in hand is successful.

A good Christian home is the best school yet discovered in which to build character. It is here the seed is sown that bears the golden grain. Parents sometimes talk of their troublesome children, and cause you to think marriage in their case a failure, and of their home as a non-paradise, whereas the home can be higher and holier than the college or university, however grand and useful well-managed schools may be.

Let it be idelibly impressed that the standard of family government should be of the highest type, and so well understood by parents and children that good cheer and delight accompany and follow home training. The home should be a type of heaven.

The third question here refers to the builder. No matter how few or how many teachers you may have, you are, after all, the chief builder of your character. Not order, but obedience to lawful authority in the home, in the church, and in the state is "heaven's first law." Peaceful and blessed order follows all cheerful and happy obedience to actual requirements.

In building character, therefore, every person is blessed with the right and power of a master workman in his or her own behalf. What an exalted privilege! Let the builder secure the aid of the best books on the market, the best counsel of friends, the best company and associations this world affords, and especially if nearing the maturity of life, the best education within reach, and you will be both useful and happy.—*Religious Telescope*.

Difference in Methods

Exchange.

It is related that, in the early Abolition days, two men went out preaching, one an old friend, and another a young man full of fire. When the friend lectured, everything ran smoothly, and he carried the audience with him. When the young man lectured, there was a row, and stones and eggs were thrown at him. It became so noticeable, that the young man spoke to the friend about it. He said:

"You and I are on the same mission, and preach the same things; and how is it that, while you are received cordially, I get nothing but abuse?"

The Quaker replied: "I will tell thee. Thee says, 'if you do so and so, you shall be punished' and I say, 'My friends, if you will do so and so, you shall not be punished.' The two mean exactly the same thing. The difference of results came from the different ways of expressing the thought."

A Double Service

To be a mother and a sister to her sons is the double function of a woman now and then, says The Congregationalist. We once knew a college student whose manners were exceptionally easy and whose whole bearing toward others was marked by sympathy and consideration. He was the most popular man in his class, and justly so. Knowing

that he had no sisters, we sometimes wondered how he had learned to be such a courteous gentleman, always practicing those little civilities which in many cases a man learns best from a sister who does her whole duty by her brother. The mystery was explained when we visited his home and came to know his gentle and queenly mother. Whether by direct precepts or by example only, she had succeeded in filling in the lives of her boys to a large extent the place of a sister, so that they understood how to carry themselves among other women, how to be attentive to their little wants without being intrusive, how to be friendly without being sentimental. When in addition to all her mothering a woman does this for her sons, she has jewel upon jewel in her crown.

Our Young People

TRUST

Scripture Lesson. Phil 4:4-13 and Psalm 121

Topic for Feb. 24

Charles Kingsley tells of a village in the far west of England where Psalm 121 was a favorite. Whenever it was announced, and the congregation oft-times called for it, all joined in singing with an earnestness, a fervor, a passion such as was heard nowhere else, such as showed how intensely they felt that the Psalm was true and true for them. Such singing, Mr. Kingsley says he never heard, when these voices joined in the old words they loved so well:

Sheltered beneath the Almighty wing
Thou shalt securely rest,
Where neither sun nor moon shall thee
By day or night molest.
At home, abroad, in peace, in war,
Thy God shall thee defend,
Conduct thee thru life's pilgrimage
Safe to thy journey's end."

It is not to be thought that these people were especially prosperous and comfortable, who had no sorrows and lived a life free from all danger. Not that. Not a man that joined in the singing of the Psalm but knew that he carried his life in his hand from day to-day, for they were fishermen. Perhaps not a woman sang that Psalm but had lost a father, a husband or a brother. A single change of wind might make again sixty widows and orphans in a single night. The fisheries might fail for the year as they frequently did. And yet despite all these they believe that God saved them. Their faith was tried if ever faith was. But it never failed. What would their lives have been without their trust in God? At the least filled with doubt and terror and always anxious for the tomorrow. But instead of this Mr. Kingsley says their lives were of hardy and hopeful enterprise; cheerful always in good luck as in bad; thankful when their labors were blest with success; and when calamity and failure came upon them they would say, "We have received good from the hand of the Lord and shall we not receive the evil? Tho He slay us, yet will we trust in Him."

This is a beautiful illustration of the idea and the blessings of a life of trust. The same idea finds also a beautiful illustration in the life of St Paul. He had been heavily troubled during his ministry (II Cor. 1:8) and sought relief on every hand. But there came a moment in Paul's religious experience when he realized that he was in the very face of death and there seemed to be no possibility of his deliverance. It was then that he turned from all earthly conditions and looking up into the face of God and says, "We have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God which raiseth the dead." It was then he felt that only God can deliver. This is trust. It is more than faith. Faith takes but trust gives. Faith is the appropriation of heavenly things to one's self;